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ABSTRACT

This report deals with several questions concerning the Finnish people's conceptions of the mass media, especially in a situation when the introduction of a new medium, television, is changing the field of mass communication. The subjects for the survey were television owners and non-owners in Lapland. The questions dealt with in this descriptive survey are the following: what is the significance attached by people to television and what are the functions which they consider television to fulfil for them; how does the introduction of television affect conceptions as to the significance and functions of the other mass media; what advance ideas do people have as to the importance and functions of television, and how do these advance ideas correspond to their actual experience; and what are the factors underlying the conception of television as significant in general and as a means of fulfilling certain functions, such as the transmission of news, general information, art and entertainment. (TS)

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PEOPLE'S CONCEPTIONS OF THE MASS MEDIA

A study about the people's conceptions as to the significance of the mass media and their functions before and after the introduction of television.

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1. BACKGROUND OF THE INVESTIGATION[1)]

This report deals with several questions concerning the people's conceptions of the mass media - especially in a situation when the introduction of a new medium, television, is changing the field of mass communication. The questions dealt with in this descriptive survey are the following. First of all, what is the significance or importance attached by people to television, and, what are the functions which they consider television to fulfil for them; secondly, how does the introduction of television affect conceptions as to the significance and functions of the other mass media; thirdly, what advance ideas do people have as to the importance and functions of television, and how do these advance ideas correspond to their actual experience; and lastly, what are the factors underlying the conception of television as significant or important in general and as a means of fulfilling certain functions, such as the transmission of news, general information, art and entertainment. - The way in which these questions are formulated is similar to that in certain earlier Finnish investigations of people's conceptions of the significance and functions of the mass media. It has to be noted that we are concerned here exclusively with the subjective images people have formed of the mass media; not necessarily with the true objective functions of the media.

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[1] The details concerning the research setting, the research material, etc, are presented in the report: Kaarle Nordenstreng: "The extension of television to Finnish Lapland", Research Reports from the Section for Long-Range Planning, the Finnish Broadcasting Company, n:o 11. The reader should familiarize himself with Nordenstreng's report before reading this.

2. CONCEPTIONS AS TO THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MASS MEDIA

In this first section we deal with the importance or significance attached by people to the mass media, and the way in which these conceptions are altered when television is introduced as a new factor in the media field. Conceptions as to the significance of the media were elicited in the following question:

> If all of the media listed on this card suddenly ceased existing, which of them would you miss the most? And the second most?

The interviewer's task was to continue in this way until all the media listed had been placed in order of decreasing importance. In the 1966 interview, when television had not yet reached the area where the interviews were made, the following media were listed on the card, in this order: radio, newspaper, magazine, books and movies. In the 1967 interview series, those who had in the meantime acquired a television set were given a card on which television was at the head of the list, followed by all the others. This question had been used in the same form in the 1965 "basic study" interviews[1], so that the findings obtained in the Lapland television project can be compared to earlier ones.

It had been observed in the 1965 study that in cases when one or the other of the electronic media - radio and television - was not available, the significance of the one which was avail-

[1] A national survey (N=1704) carried out jointly by the Finnish Broadcasting Company and the Universities of Helsinki, Tampere and Turku to discover patterns of use and evaluation of the mass media.

able was especially great. On the basis of this observation we might assume that before the introduction of television the importance of radio was especially great, and that specifically this importance has been reduced by television. On the other hand, we would not expect the availability of television to affect the position of the newspaper to any great extent.

Table 1 illustrates the way in which the most favored position was distributed among the various media, among both those who by 1967 had acquired a TV set and those who had not, in both interviews of the Lapland project. For purposes of comparison the corresponding data from the 1965 research, for television owners and non-owners, are also shown.

If we examine the distributions for TV-non-owners, we find that in the two interviews of the Lapland study - 1966 and 1967, they remain practically unchanged, and that they are also almost identical with the distribution among non-owners found in the 1965 "basic study". The "most-preferred" distribution among television non-owners thus appears to be highly stable. In these

TABLE 1. The significance of the media. The percentual distributions of the most missed media in the following groups:

+TV:L66 = Lapland data, TV-owners, 1966 interview
+TV:L67 = Lapland data, TV-owners, 1967 interview
+TV:b65 = basic study data, TV-owners
-TV:L66 = Lapland data, TV-non-owners, 1966 interview
-TV:L67 = Lapland data, TV-non-owners, 1967 interview
-TV:b65 = basic study data, TV-non-owners

media	+TV:L66	+TV:L67	+TV:b65	-TV:L66	-TV:L67	-TV:b65
television	·	27 %	35 %	·	·	·
radio	56 %	22	19	64 %	62 %	61 %
newspapers	35	41	40	20	30	25
magazines	1	3	1	1.5	1	1
books	4.5	3	5	4	5	6
movies	0	0	0	1	0.5	0
don't know	3.5	4	0	0.5	1.5	7
	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %

groups, radio is clearly the most important of the media; this position has been assigned to it by almost two thirds of the respondents in each group. Newspapers were considered to be the most important by slighly less than one third of each group, and only very few respondents (6-7%) gave that position to other media - books, magazines and movies. In the group which in 1967 already owned a television set, the preference distribution for 1966, before the introduction of television, corresponded fairly closely to the distributions for non-owners, although the former showed slightly less preference for radio and slightly more for the newspapers than did the true non-owners.

The media preferences among those Lapland respondents who in 1967 have acquired a television have changed from 1966 to 1967, so that they now correspond fairly closely to that characterizing the 1965 television owners. As had been assumed, the importance of radio has suffered a severe decline; the loss between 1966 and 1967 is as much as 34 %-units. Surprisingly enough, this loss is not all in favor of television; the group for whom newspapers are the most important of the media has increased by 6 %-units. Thus in 1967, the most important medium for television owners is the newspaper; this was true also of television owners in the 1965 basic study. The greater importance of newspapers compared to television is also supported by the results of research studies during the 1966 television strike and the 1967 newspaper strike. The lack of newspapers irritated people more than that of television.

The fact that it is the newspaper which has gained in importance with the coming of television can be interpreted in a number of ways. For example, the importance of the daily press

may have increased because its news and commentary provides the background for those events of which often only brief flashes are obtained from television, thus permitting the reader to form an more integrated world view. In a study of the readership of a certain East Finnish newspaper, which compared television owners and non-owners as to what they read in the paper, it was found that the non-owners read more than the owners of practically everything, except for news commentary and background items, of which the TV-owners read considerably more. This interpretation also receives indirect support from the observation that, while television has in general led to a decrease in library borrowing, it has brought about an increase in loans of a particular type of instrumental literature. Another explanation might rest on the observation that with the coming of television people's interest has shifted from foreign to domestic and local affairs. It has also been found that in Finland the newspaper is felt to be the most important source of local news.

It further appears from Table 1 that for the television owners in the Lapland data, television was the most important of the media somewhat less often than for the owners in the 1965 data. Evidently in 1967 these people had had a television set for such a short time before the interview that their conceptions had not had time to crystallize to the same extent as those of the 1965 owners, whose average period of contact with television was clearly longer.

When the relative importance of the media was approached by comparing the <u>means</u> of the order-of-importance estimates for each medium, the results corresponded fairly well to those obtained by examining merely the medium given first place. In

1966 radio and the newspaper, in that order, were clearly the most important in both groups. Then there is a considerable gap before we come to the next, magazines, followed by books and movies. An interesting observation is that, although books were given first place more often than magazines, a comparison of means shows the latter to be more important. Evidently there is a small "elite" for whom books are all in all, but for the general public books are less important than magazines. The scatter in both groups is greatest for the category of books.

Among television non-owners, there is very little difference in means or scatters between 1966 and 1967. Among TV-owners, on the other hand, there are some very interesting changes. While radio is overshadowed by television as the single most important medium, in a comparison of means it comes out ahead. As has already been mentioned, television is still such a new medium for this group that conceptions as to its importance have not yet had time to crystallize by the time of the second interview. The fact that estimates as to its importance are the most widely scattered also lends support to this conclusion. On the other hand, it is also possible that in some groups television has not lived up to expectations and that the large scatter is due to this.

As we saw in Table 1, the preference distribution among the non-owners in the Lapland study appeared quite stable from the first interview to the second. On the other hand, in a panel research design a mere comparison of <u>distributions</u> between two points in time is not sufficient proof of stability, since changes in opposing directions may cancel each other out. This has been the case here also. If we leave out those respondents

who on either the first, the second or both occasions gave "don't know" answers, among TV-non-owners a full 35 % or over one third of the rest have switched their most important medium. Most faithful to their original choice are those who in 1966 considered radio the most important - of these 26 % preferred some other medium in 1967. Less stable are those who in 1966 preferred the newspaper to all other media; 49 % have changed their minds by 1967. And of those who in 1966 preferred some other medium - magazines, books or movies - a full 77 % subsequently shifted to either radio or newspapers. It would thus appear that the distribution is more stable than the preferences.

As can be gathered from the sharp decline of radio preference among television owners in Lapland between 1966 and -67, the group which in 1967 prefers television has been recruited above all from former radio lovers. Of those who in 1966 considered radio the most important medium, 36 % have become television supporters. The corresponding figure for newspaper preferrers is 14 %, for those who prefer other media 17 % and for the dont-know respondents 12.5 %. On the other hand, quite a few of those who in 1966 considered radio the most important have shifted their preference to newspapers; this accounts for 25 %, one fourth of the total. 30 % remained faithful to their original preference. Of those who in 1966 preferred newspapers, on the other hand, a full 65 % claimed the same preference a year later. These findings indicate that it is the electronic media - radio and television - that are mutually compensating. This is supported by the fact that those who had acquired a television set now listened to the radio a great deal less, while the effect of TV on newspaper reading has been slighter.

3. CONCEPTIONS AS TO THE FUNCTIONS OF THE MASS MEDIA

In this section we are concerned with people's ideas as to the funtions of the media, i.e. the purposes for which they claim to use the media, and the way in which these conceptions are affected when television is introduced. Four functions or function areas were asked about: the news function, the information function, the art function and the entertainment function. Questions concerning the use of the various media for these functional areas were posed as follows:

Which of these media do you use most often -

- When you want to know what has happened in the world? (NEWS FUNCTION)
- When you want to develop yourself, or in general to increase your knowledge in different fields? (INFORMATION FUNCTION)
- When you want to have an artistic experience, or in general to enjoy art? (ART FUNCTION)
- When you want to relax or spend your leisure moments? (ENTERTAINMENT FUNCTION)

As in the case of the question about the general significance of the media, here again the respondent was given a card containing a list of media. Since these lists had been used, in the same form, also in the 1965 interviews, the data were again comparable.

The preferences of different media on different function areas in the previously used groups are given in Table 2. - 11
Let us first examine conceptions of the functions of the media among those who do <u>not</u> own a television set, i.e. among those

respondents in the Lapland study who had not acquired a set, on both interview occasions and, for purposes of comparison, among the television non-owners of the 1965 study.

As we see from Table 2, the distributions in the various groups again correspond quite closely. This is especially so in the case of the news function and the information function. - When we compare the significance of the various media in serving different functions, we find that the radio is considered most important in three functional areas: news, art and entertainment. In the field of information, radio is about even with the newspapers, but books are more important than either. In any case, before television, radio appears to fulfil the role of a certain kind of general medium. Its versatility index varies from 36 % to 34 % in the different groups. (The versatility index is obtained by adding up the number of respondents in each group who say that they use the radio most often for a given function, and dividing the sum by the product of the number of function questions (four) and the total number of respondents in a given group.)

The functions of the other media, compared to radio, seem to be more specific. The newspaper is experienced as more important in the area of the instrumental functions (news and information) than in that of the expressive functions (art and entertainment). Its versatility index varies between 14 % and 13 %. Of the other media, books are felt to be important in the field of the information function, but they have some significance also in those of art and entertainment. Their versatility indices vary between 18 % and 15 %. The importance of magazines and movies in various areas is already smaller; the former are sig-

TABLE 2. The conceptions of the functions of the media. The percentual distributions of the most used media in news, information, art and entertainment function areas. The groups are same as in Table 1.

NEWS FUNCTION

media	+TV:L66	+TV:L67	+TV:b65	-TV:L66	-TV:L67	-TV:b65
television	·	35 %	36 %	·	·	·
radio	72 %	29	22	66.5 %	68 %	66 %
newspapers	22	31	40	28	24	24
magazines	1	0	1	0.5	2	0
books	0	0	0	1	0	0
movies	0	0	0	0	0	1
don't know	5	5	1	3	6	9
	100 %	100 %	100 %	99 %	100 %	100 %

INFORMATION FUNCTION

media	+TV:L66	+TV:L67	+TV:b65	-TV:L66	-TV:L67	-TV:b65
television	·	22 %	23 %	·	·	·
radio	21 %	13	6	19 %	20 %	19 %
newspapers	22	11	14	19	21	20
magazines	5	6	3	9	7	5
books	41	36	41	38	36	31
movies	0	0	0	1	1	1
don't know	10	12	12	14	15	24
	99 %	100 %	99	100 %	100 %	100 %

ART FUNCTION

media	+TV:L66	+TV:L67	+TV:b65	-TV:L66	-TV:L67	-TV:b65
television	·	45 %	52 %	·	·	·
radio	20 %	6	4	19	17 %	27 %
newspapers	2	0	1	1	1	2
magazines	6	3	2	8	8	2
books	13	7	9	11	13	7
movies	9	3	5	7	12	7
don't know	50	36	27	54	49	55
	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %

ENTERTAINMENT FUNCTION

media	+TV:L66	+TV:L67	+TV:b65	-TV:L66	-TV:L67	-TV:b65
television	·	46 %	54 %	·	·	·
radio	35 %	14	13	37 %	36 %	44 %
newspapers	7	4	3	8	7	8
magazines	15	9	10	15	19	11
books	27	14	12	24	20	15
movies	6	3	1	6	5	2
don't know	10	10	7	10	13	20
	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %

nificant primarily as a medium of entertainment, the latter as an art medium.

Although the preference distributions of the media over the various functional areas among the TV non-owners in the Lapland study remain almost unchanged from the first phase (1966) to the second (1967), a considerable number of shifts have nevertheless occurred. If we again omit the 'don't know' answers for either or both of the interviews, 33 % of the respondents have changed the medium they use most often for obtaining news, 48 % have changed their information medium, 49 % their art medium, and 51 % or over half the medium they use most often for entertainment.

Let us now examine the effect of television on these conceptions. Table 2 gives also the data for TV-owners, again for both interview phases and for the TV-owners in the 1965 basic study.

As far as the TV-owners in the Lapland study are concerned, their conceptions as to the functions of the media in 1966, before they had acquired television sets, did not differ to any noticeable extent from those of the non-owners already discussed. But the introduction of television has changed these conceptions to a very great extent, so that by 1967 conceptions in this group corresponded quite closely to those of the TV-owners in the 1965 basic study. (Although the differences between these groups are quite small, they nevertheless give rise to some interesting speculations; but we shall not enter upon these here.)

Table 2 does not yet give a really good picture of the way in which television has affected conceptions of the media functions. This can be seen more clearly from Table 3, which gives first the percentual change, for each medium, in a given func-

tional field[1], and secondly, the proportion, for each medium, of those who have shifted from some preferred medium to television, those who have remained with the same medium, shifted to another medium or to the don't-know category.

Let us now examine the results one medium at a time.

RADIO. The significance of radio has decreased with the coming of television across the board, most of all, however, in the functional fields of art and entertainment. A preference for radio has changed to a preference for television fairly evenly for all functions, indicating that television can compensate for radio pretty much regardless of function. Thus it can be said that with the coming of television radio loses its function as a general, all-purpose medium. The function of radio which is retained best is that of a transmitter of news.

NEWSPAPER. The importance of the newspaper as a transmitter of news has actually increased with the coming of television. This is consistent with the finding that the general significance of the newspaper has also risen. In other functional fields the newspaper has lost some of its significance, though, taken as a whole, less than any other medium. When we examine changes from 1966 to 1967, we find that television replaces the newspaper best in the entertainment function and most poorly in the area of general information. It is interesting to note that, while the significance of the newspaper in the news area, taken as a whole, has increased, an entire 32 % of those who preferred the newspaper as a news medium in 1966 have shifted to television as

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[1] This change is computed by subtracting from those preferring a given medium for a given function in 1966 those who prefer it for the same function in 1967, and calculating what percentage the difference forms of the 1966 number.

TABLE 3. Changes in conceptions as to the functions of the media after the introduction of television. General change in preference, together with shift from various media.

	General change	N	Shift to television	Remains stable	Shift to other	Shift to don't know category	
news function[1]							
radio	-60 %	161	37 %	33 %	26 %	4 %	100 %
newspaper	+38	50	32	48	18	2	100 %
information function[2]							
radio	-39 %	46	43 %	20 %	33 %	4 %	100 %
newspaper	-49	49	20	8	58	14	100 %
magazine	+8	12	8	17	58	17	100 %
book	-12	92	11	51	22	16	100 %
art function[3]							
radio	-71 %	45	44 %	11 %	21 %	24 %	100 %
magazine	-57	14	50	0	0	50	100 %
book	-43	28	43	21	11	25	100 %
movie	-70	20	65	5	5	25	100 %
entertainment function							
radio	-60 %	78	47 %	19 %	26 %	8 %	100 %
newspaper	-47	15	53	7	27	13	100 %
magazine	-36	33	52	18	24	6	100 %
book	-47	60	38	28	22	12	100 %
movie	-64	14	36	14	43	7	100 %
functions combined							
radio	-59 %	330	41 %	25 %	26 %	8 %	100 %
newspaper	-14	114	30	25	36	9	100 %
magazine	-34	59	42	14	25	19	100 %
book	-28	180	25	39	20	16	100 %
movie	-68	34	53	9	20	18	100 %

[1] magazine, book and movie omitted because of low frequencies

[2] movie omitted because of low frequency

[3] newspaper omitted because of low frequency

a preferred medium. In general, it appears that those who preferred the newspaper in 1966 have not been particularly faithful to their medium; that its significance has not declined is due to the large numbers who have shifted to the newspaper from some other medium.

BOOKS. The significance of the book, taken again as a whole, has decreased less than that of any other medium except the newspaper. Its greatest decline has been in the field of the expressive functions (art and entertainment); the loss of significance as a medium of information has been smaller. Those who preferred it in 1966 for the expressive functions have also been more likely to shift to television for these functions than those who had used books to obtain information. Unlike the newspaper, the book seems to have retained its significance due to the faithfulness of its users; there have been fewer shifts to television or other media.

MAGAZINES: To a certain extent, the picture for this medium resembles that for the newspaper and books, although its significance as a whole has decreased more than that of the latter media. In the field of the information function, however, its significance has actually increased, despite the fact that only 17 % of those who originally preferred this medium have remained faithful to it. Television has replaced the magazine, like the book, most fully in the area of the expressive functions.

FILM. Taken as a whole, the movie has lost more of its significance with the coming of television that any other medium. This has been due to its lack of instrumental function, with regard to which television has replaced other media to a lesser extent than in the field of the expressive functions.

All in all, the effect of television has been most radical in the sphere of the electronic media - radio and the film - and less so in the field of the printed media, the newspaper, the book and the magazine. Of the latter, the medium most affected has been the magazine. Furthermore, television has replaced other media most significantly in the area of the expressive functions, art and entertainment, and less so for the instrumental functions, news and information.

4. ADVANCE NOTIONS AS TO THE SIGNIFICANCE AND FUNCTIONS OF TELEVISION

In this section we are concerned with the 1966 estimates of the Lapland respondents as to how important they thought television would become for them, compared with the other media, both in general and separately for each functional area. Thus we are interested in 1) what expectations people have of television beforehand, and 2) to what extent these correspond to actual experience; i.e. are there any similarities between these advance ideas, elicited in 1966, and the conceptions, based on experience, elicited in 1967.

Advance conceptions as to the general significance of television were elicited in the 1966 interviews by means of the following question:

> Imagine that you have a TV set and that programs are easy easy to catch here. In that case, which would be more important for you, television or radio? And what about television and newspaper?

The question was continued until the respondent had compared television with each of the other media. Ideas as to the significance of television in the various functional areas were elicited by means of the following question:

> Imagine that you have a television and that programs are easy to catch here. In that case, which would you use more often if you wanted to find out what has happened in the world, television or ... (the medium preferred by the respondent for this function in previous questions)?

In the same way, the other functions were asked about: information, art and entertainment. Note that television was not compared to each of the other media, but only to the one that the respondent, in answer to earlier questions, had said that he used most often for that function.

Table 4 shows the distribution of the responses to these questions, separately for TV- owners and non-owners. The art function, however, has been left out, since, judging by the numerous "don't-know" responses, it was clearly alien to the respondents.

When we examine advance ideas as to the general significance of television, we find that television is estimated as less important than the newspaper, but more important than the other media. It is interesting that, although radio was clearly the most important medium before the coming of television, it is overshadowed by television already in these advance opinions, while the newspaper, which earlier was less important than radio, in turn overshadows television. The order of the media, in these preconceived ideas, appears to be the following: newspaper, television, radio, books, magazines and movies. This is exactly the same order as that elicited by asking merely for the most important medium, after the introduction of TV in 1967.
Thus people seem to have a highly accurate picture already in advance as to how television will affect their views of the general significance of the media.

We were naturally expecting that those who in 1967 have acquired a TV-set would consider it more important already beforehand than those not acquiring one. This seems, however, not to hold true. When we compare these advance ideas as to the gen-

TABLE 4. Advance conceptions as to the significance of television in general and in various functional areas (art function excluded) among TV-owners (+TV) and non-owners (-TV) in the Lapland data. Abbreviations: TV = television, RD = radio, NP = newspapers, MG = magazines, BO = books, MO = movies and DK = don't know.[1]

Media:	Comparison with 1966	General significance		News function		Inform. function		Entertainment function	
		+TV	-TV	+TV	-TV	+TV	-TV	+TV	-TV
TV-RD	TV more important	60%	56%	64%	70%	41%	67%	49%	50%
	equal importance, DK	12	12	11	10	26	16	10	13
	RD more important	28	32	25	20	33	16	41	37
	(N=)	(222)	(221)	(161)	(149)	(46)	(43)	(78)	(82)
TV-NP	TV more important	31%	36%	44%	53%	43%	45%	47%	67%
	equal importance, DK	13	12	6	10	16	17	7	6
	NP more important	56	52	50	37	41	38	46	27
	(N=)	(222)	(221)	(50)	(62)	(49)	(42)	(15)	(18)
TV-MG	TV more important	66%	65%			58%	60%	73%	41%
	equal importance, DK	17	12			17	10	9	17
	MG more important	17	23			25	30	18	42
	(N=)	(222)	(221)			(12)	(20)	(33)	(32)
TV-BO	TV more important	64%	62%			25%	21%	45%	25%
	equal importance, DK	10	9			15	13	13	8
	BO mo important	26	29			60	66	42	67
	(N=)	(222)	(221)			(92)	(84)	(60)	(52)
TV-MO	TV more important	88%	84%					57%	75%
	equal importance, DK	7	11					14	8
	MO more important	5	5					29	17
	(N=)	(222)	(221)					(14)	(12)

[1] The number of respondents for the general significance of the media is always the same, since the respondents compared each medium to television. On the other hand, the number of respondents for each functional area is different. For example, the distribution for radio in the news function is computed only for those who in 1966 considered radio their most important news medium.

eral significance of television between owners and non-owners, we find that there is not much difference between them.

Let us now examine advance ideas as to the significance of television in various functional areas, among those who in 1967 have acquired a TV set. - Concerning the news function, those

who in 1966 prefer the radio think that television will be more important than this medium, while those who prefer the newspaper feel that this will continue to be more important than television. As shown by Table 3, with the coming of television radio has lost some of its significance in this functional area, while that of the newspaper has increased somewhat. The shift from radio to television, it is true, has not been as sizable as might have been expected on the basis of these advance opinions.

With regard to the informational function, 1966 adherents above all of the magazine but also of radio and the newspaper consider that television will become more important than these media, while those who prefer books feel that these will retain their priority. And in fact, as we see from Tables 2 and 3, the other media (except the magazine) have suffered more than books with the coming of television.

Finally, in the field of the entertainment funtion, all the respondents, regardless of their preferred medium, considered that television would become the dominant medium in this field, which is in fact what has happened. Thus the respondents have had a fairly clear idea already beforehand as to the changes induced by television in the significance of the various media in different functional fields.

Let us now see to what extent advance ideas as to the general significance of television, among those who subsequently acquired a television set, correspond to its experienced significance as revealed in the 1967 interviews. The analysis showed that the correspondence was fairly close where radio and the newspaper were concerned. Those who in 1966 thought that television would be more important than radio for them answered in this way also

in 1967, while those who in 1966 thought that radio would retain its priority for them also continued to feel this way. The same result was obtained also for the newspaper. On the other hand, those who in 1966 felt that either the magazine, the book or the movie would remain more important for them than television nevertheless considered television more important when interviewed in 1967. In this respect, then, preconceived opinions did not correspond to subsequent reality.

We come now to the correspondence between expectation and reality in each functional area, among TV-owners. These results will not be described here in detail, but they help us to form a picture of the functional areas in which television is able to replace some other medium. In the news function, TV seems able to replace radio, but not the newspaper. Radio, however, still retains its own significance here. Where the informational function is concerned, television compensates only for radio. While the significance of the other media in this area also declined, this last analysis showed that TV has not been able to replace them to any great extent. The effect of television appears to have been above all to break up the functional field and to induce a great deal of random shifting from one medium to another. - In the area of the entertainment function, television is able to replace each of the other media, most of all, however, radio and the newspaper, least of all magazines and books.

These findings confirm the conception that television can replace the electronic media - radio and the film in those areas in which it is significant - better than the printed media. The latter can be replaced by television mainly with

regard to the expressive functions, art and entertainment.

Evidently conceptions concerning television did not yet have time to crystallize fully before the second interview stage. On the other hand, we could observe that the respondents already had quite an accurate picture beforehand as to the changes television would bring in the significance of the media in general and in particular functional areas.

5. FACTORS AFFECTING THE SIGNIFICANCE AND VERSATILITY CONCEPTIONS OF TELEVISION

On the basis of the questions concerning the advance ideas as to the significance and functions of television, two scales were constructed, one of them measuring the estimated general significance of television and the other measuring the versatility of functions television was expected to fulfil. Also a scale measuring the actual or experienced versatility of functions of television was constructed on the basis of the 1967 interview data. - In that connection, it was observed that television was experienced in reality as somewhat more important than the respondents had expected beforehand. In 1967, 29 % of the respondents considered television the most important medium (this figure is somewhat higher than in Table 1, since the don't-know responses are here omitted), while in 1966 only 18 % thought that it would become more important than the other media. When comparing the expected and actual versatility of functions fulfilled by television it was found, on the other hand, that television was expected to overshadow the other media in different function areas more often than it has in reality done. Thus the actual general significance of television was slightly greater than that predicted, while its functional versatility was somewhat smaller. This is an indication that the general significance of the mass media is quite clearly affected by other factors in addition to the extent to which the material they offer is able to satisfy the various needs of the receiver.

During this study it was also observed that in a certain sense television served as a status symbol. Those who had acquired a TV set felt that their social status had risen between 1966 and 1967, while those who had not felt that it had declined. On the basis of the theory of cognitive dissonance we might conclude that already the relatively high cost of a TV set would force people to take a more positive attitude toward it, even if it were not able to replace the other media in various function areas to the extent they had expected.

As we saw in the preceding section, advance ideas as to the general significance of television did not differ to any noticeable extent between those who subsequently acquired a set and those who did not, although we might have expected that the former would consider television already in advance more important than the latter. The two groups also did not differ to any great extent as to the importance they expected television to have in various functional areas. Actually, a factor affecting these advance ideas more is whether or not the respondent <u>intended</u> in 1966 to acquire a TV. Those who at this stage did not intend to do so considered television considerably less important than those who did. On the other hand, those who in 1966 did not intend to buy a TV set, but later nevertheless did so, had changed their conception as to the general significance of television more strongly in a positive direction than the rest of those who had acquired a TV set. In this group the greatest change, in a positive direction, of ideas concerning the functional versatility of television were also found, though not as great, in terms of mean standard values, as the change concerning the general significance of television. This can be

interpreted on the basis of the cognitive dissonance theory: those who, perhaps for financial reasons, had not intended to acquire a television set, but did so nevertheless, were subject to greater dissonance than the others, and resolved the situation by ascribing greater value to the medium. This interpretation was tested by standardizing level of income, and the result were consistent with the hypothesis. The relative change in a positive direction of the general significance ascribed to television was greatest among that low-income group who in 1966 were not certain whether they would buy a TV set, but who subsequently did so.

The political views of the individual also appear to affect his attitude toward television. Those identifying with the left wing in politics considered television more important, both in advance and after actual experience, than did those identifying with the right wing. Furthermore, the relative general significance ascribed to television increased among the leftwingers, while it decreased among the rightwingers and the don't know respondents. This finding can again be interpreted on the basis of the cognitive dissonance theory. An alternative explanation may be that the political situation in the country at the time - i.e. the existence of a rightwing or leftwing majority in Parliament - may affect attitudes toward a state-controlled mass medium.